Kids These Days, or Haters Gonna Hate

People have been talking shit about kid's stuff since forever. Here's some hater talk dating from 1790 to 2005. (Emphasis on English language sources cuz that's what I got.)

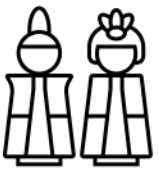
murphyao ink
2026

"The free access which many young people have to romances, novels, and plays has poisoned the mind and corrupted the morals of many a promising youth; and prevented others from improving their minds in useful knowledge. Parents take care to feed their children with wholesome diet; and yet how unconcerned about the provision for the mind, whether they are furnished with salutary food, or with trash, chaff, or poison?"
- Reverend Enos Hitchcock, *Memoirs of the Bloomsgrove Family,* 1790

"The indecent foreign dance called the *Waltz* was introduced ... at the English Court on Friday last ... It is quite sufficient to cast one's eyes on the voluptuous intertwining of the limbs, and close compressure of the bodies ... to see that it is far indeed removed from the modest reserve which has hitherto been considered distinctive of English females. So long as this obscene display was confined to prostitutes and adulteresses, we did not think it deserving of notice; but now that it is ... forced on the respectable classes of society by the evil example of their superiors, we feel it a duty to warn every parent against exposing his daughter to so fatal a contagion."

- *Times of London,* 1816

“Hide-and-seek is a disruptive and disorderly game that has no place in a well-behaved household.”
- *The North American Review*, 1878



“The use of dolls in play is a harmful influence on young girls, encouraging vanity and materialism.”
- *The North American Review*, 1878

I can’t locate either of those quotes either...

"The reading of novels is a dangerous and addictive pastime that can lead to mental and moral degeneration."
- *The North American Review*
1831

This came from @curious.parenting on Instagram, but I can't verify the quote! While searching I found this:

"[W]ould it not be logical to declare the reading of novels as hurtful to girls before marriage in France as to young wives after. In both cases such reading would serve only to excite their thirst in the desert." – "Girls' Novels in France" by Yetta Blaze De Bury, *The North American Review*, 1899

"The bicycle is a pernicious craze that has ruined the morals of many young people."
– *The New York Times*, 1896

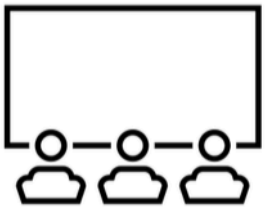
Could not find the original source, but I did find this from McGill University's Office for Science and Society ("Separating Sense from Nonsense"):

"Bicycles were thought by many in the Victorian era to lead to killing rampages and to render women exhausted and incapable of bearing children."

"The use of marbles in play is a dangerous pastime that promotes gambling and fosters a disregard for property rights."
- *Chicago Tribune* 1901

"The game of Red Light, Green Light is a wasteful and inefficient use of children's time and energy."
- *The Boston Transcript*, 1902

Okay, did curious.parenting just make all of these up?! I can't verify any of them. How disappointing. (Maybe I am the disappointment.)



"This new form of entertainment has gone far to blast maidenhood ... Depraved adults with candies and pennies beguile children with the inevitable result. The Society has prosecuted many for leading girls astray through these picture shows, but GOD alone knows how many are leading dissolute lives begun at the "moving pictures.'"

- *Annual Report of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children,* 1909

“The game of tag is a useless and disruptive activity that should be banned from playgrounds and schools.”
- *The New York Times*, 1923

“Radio is a menace that will divert the minds of young people from their studies and make them idle.”
- *The New York Times*, 1925

“Does the telephone make men more active or more lazy? Does [it] break up home life and the old practice of visiting friends?” - Survey by the Knights of Columbus Adult Education Committee, San Francisco Bay Area, 1926

"Supposing you get used to eating sandwiches made with very strong seasonings... You will lose your taste for simple bread and butter and for finer food. The same is true of reading strong comic books. If later on you want to read a good novel... you will never be able to appreciate [it] if in comic-book fashion you expect that at any minute someone will appear and pitch both of them out of the window." - Frederic Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent*, 1954

"Many adults think that the crimes described in comic books are so far removed from the child's life that for children they are merely something imaginative... But we have found this to be a great error. ... A bank robbery is easily translated into the rifling of a candy store. Delinquencies formerly restricted to adults are increasingly committed by young people and children ... All child drug addicts, and all children drawn into the narcotics traffic as messengers, with whom we have had contact, were inveterate comic-book readers. This... is not good mental nourishment for children!"

- Fredric Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent,* 1954

“The effect of rock and roll on young people, is to turn them into devil worshippers; to stimulate self-expression through sex; to provoke lawlessness; impair nervous stability and destroy the sanctity of marriage. It is an evil influence on the youth of our country.”
- Minister Albert Carter, 1956

"The *disturbing* material in *Grand Theft Auto* and other games like it is stealing the innocence of our children and it's making the difficult job of being a parent even harder ... I believe that the ability of our children to access pornographic and outrageously violent material on video games rated for adults is spiraling out of control."
- Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, 2005

In conclusion, everything and everyone is the worst forever! Actually, maybe the moral is:

because everything is the wrong thing to do anyway! Live long and prosper!

www.murphyao.com
@murphyao.ink